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## *Tech Center Rehab Finished by Corps of Engineers*

By John Connor  
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FOB KALSU, Iraq – A project to rehabilitate the basic infrastructure of the Iskandiriyaha Vocational Technology Center is now completed.

Thanks to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the center will be able to support the needs of over 1,000 students, some living there full time, according to Fitsum Kebede, the engineer who handled the project for the Corps' Najaf/North Babil Resident Office.

The main objective of the project was to supply materials, labor and equipment to design, upgrade and renovate water, sewage, electrical utilities and food facilities at the Iskandrariyaha Vo-tech, Kebede said.

The project, which cost over \$600,000, included renovating and outfitting the existing food preparation and dining facility at the center, he said.

New water and sewer systems were installed, including tanks, pumps and underground piping networks, said Lt. Col. Gregory McMahan, officer-in-charge of the Corps' Forat Area Office, of which the Najaf/North Babil Resident Office is part. The Forat Area Office is headquartered at Forward Operating Base Kalsu.

The work also included supply and installing new electric generators, switchgear, and automatic transfer switch, as well as providing the electrical wiring, lighting and circuitry required to support the machinery and automotive shops, and floor repairs, according to Kebede.

The just-completed rehab of the facility's basic infrastructure took about three



New tile floors were part of the rehabilitation project for the Iskandiriyaha Vocational Technology Center. The \$600,000 project included renovating and outfitting the existing kitchen and dining facility, and was overseen by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region South district. The center will serve 1,000 students. Photo by John Connor, USACE

months from start to finish and was the second phase of a three-phase operation. The final phase will feature improving student living quarters by renovating seven dormitories and a theater.

The Najaf/North Babil Resident Office and the Forat Area Office are part of the Corps' Gulf Region South District, which serves the nine southern provinces of Iraq.

Kebede, who is wrapping up his tour in Iraq as a project and resident engineer with the Corps of Engineers, cited the Vot-tech project as one of the many projects that kept him going. "I have seen that the

reconstruction missions we are providing to the Iraqi people are essential and we are making a difference in their lives," he said.

He also said that the Iraqi people are among "the most courteous, respectful, and hospitable people" he ever has met and added that "I was honored and privileged to have the opportunity to work with them."

**Note:** John Connor is a public affairs officer with the Gulf Region South district, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Iraq. For more information, call 540-665-2656 or email requests to [CEGRD.PAO@tac01.usace.army.mil](mailto:CEGRD.PAO@tac01.usace.army.mil). For more information on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Iraq, visit [www.grd.usace.army.mil](http://www.grd.usace.army.mil).